



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

News Release

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS "HIGH PERFORMANCE" BONUS TO HAWAII FOR FOOD STAMP ACCESS

HONOLULU — The Department of Human Services (DHS) received a \$507,892 high performance bonus from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Hawaii's efforts to ensure Hawaii residents who qualify for Food Stamps actually receive the benefits.

Deputy Undersecretary for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Kate Coler presented the check to Governor Linda Lingle and DHS Director Lillian Koller today at a ceremony at the Governor's Office of the Hawaii State Capitol. The Department achieved a 92.4 percent access rate to the Federal Food Stamp Program for the federal 2004 fiscal year.

The Food Stamp Program in Hawaii serves an estimated 91,000 individuals per month, which is about 46,000 households statewide. The program pays about \$13.07 million in nutrition assistance per month.

"The award is a great example of the Department of Human Services' commitment to provide quality service to Hawai'i residents," Governor Lingle said. "Their efforts are a reflection of the efficient teamwork and cooperation the public expects from state government."

Hawaii was one of four states to receive bonuses for its food stamp access. The other states receiving awards were the District of Columbia, Louisiana and Missouri. A total of 12 states received bonuses for demonstrating high or improved performance in administering the Food Stamp Program.

"We are extremely proud of our workers and their day-to-day efforts in maintaining Food Stamp access to our customers," Koller said. "The diligence of our staff ensures that those in Hawai'i who need Food Stamps, will receive this vital nutrition."

DHS officials said more than 500 employees had a part in maintaining the access rate. Staff members were from the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division.

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